

# Letter

## Save Stony Valley

### EDITOR:

A FEW MILES north of Harrisburg there is a relatively unknown isolated nature wilderness of over 35,000 acres containing unique fauna and flora. Stony Valley took many thousands of years to develop.

The area was purchased from the Reading Co. in 1945 by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. In 1969 over 1,700 acres of land in the heart of this area was traded by the Game Commission to the Pennsylvania Power and Light Company which plans the construction of a huge pump storage hydro-electric facility there. Originally the project was to supply local areas in times of peak consumption, but plans have mushroomed to the point where it will be the largest hydro-electric plant in the Susquehanna Valley and will supply electric power as far away as New Jersey.

An additional, as yet undetermined, amount of land will be lost to transmission lines and access roads. So it is feared that the entire area, from a wilderness standpoint, will be destroyed.

**THIS IS** particularly disturbing.

Specifically, the area to be lost consists of four miles of bottom land, the very choicest ground, including marsh and woodland meadow. A rare bush grows here as does a fine stand of American holly. Thousands of mature trees shade the ground, beneath which are great stands of rhododendrum and other shrubs.

This rare formation offers a last haven for migrating and resident birds and animals, and there is still room here for mink, beaver, deer and even an occasional bear.

Running through this low area are four miles of Stony Creek. In spite of measurable amounts of acid mine drainage, which the Fish Commission hopes to remedy, fastidious brook trout thrive throughout its length; the water is pleasant and safe to drink directly from the stream, and may someday be vital to Harrisburg's water supply.

We were originally told by PP&L that cool water would issue from the lower dam into Stony Creek, which would improve water quality, but now it is feared at least five-degree increase in water temperature is to be expected. This could cause serious damage to the entire stream.

We no longer have the great resources that we once had and the value of Stony Valley and Creek is far too great to future generations to be sacrificed for a relatively small financial saving to the PP&L. In their own words, "All other sites would have higher development costs." It seems certain that another location could be found where objection would be minimal and destruction of non-renewable natural resources minimized.

—Dr. John A. Fritchey, Jr., President,  
Dauphin Chapter, Trout Unlimited  
Harrisburg RD 3